

Little things I never said

by thepapergirl

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Summary: I curled my knees to my chest in an attempt to stop the clammy iron hand that gripped my chest with fear. 'Strong you are, Camicazi. STRONG is what you will have to be,'

## 1. Little worlds of our own

You and I- we came from different worlds, we did.

You, who had never really KNOWN your father- not on a deeper note, at least.

Me, who had never even laid eyes on my father; not since I was little, anyway. Not since I was but three years old when I saw him wading through the snow from our doorway. I remember running, tearing away from my mother, blonde hair swinging around me in long tangled beams of gold.

Never said much, he did. Just swung me over his shoulder, grinning. Grinning, like I was the funniest thing he'd ever laid eyes on.

Just kept smiling down at me, his eyeteeth glinting in the darkness.

He touched my nose, gently, with one cold finger, as if he were afraid I'd break into a million pieces- in awe.

He let me go, then, and I watched as he turned tail and walked away. My own mother had to hold me back, thrashing and hollering like mad.

I never saw him again.

My home was another world from yours- different from Berk in the craziest sense possible.

Bog-Burglar islands weren't, by ANY stretch of the imagination, comfortable.

You couldn't get cozy in a place that was always either frozen over, or catching on fire.

(We weren't known for our fire-breathing tendencies as much as our dragons wereâ€¦)

But the islands had a kind of demanding beauty about them, one that only I seemed to notice.

I fell in love with that difficult piece of land, I did.

I loved the wild cliff-face that dropped off into the ocean. Those cliff-faces proved particularly useful for watching sunrises; for watching the sky melt from the blackness into a winking melody of pinks and oranges and, finally, a glorious triumph of blue. Since I was a mere three years old, around the time my father had left, these places became my only refuge. I would sneak out in the early hours of the morning, wiggle out of the windows, if I could, just to watch the scene of nature that drew me like a moth to a flame.

The land was just as stubborn as the people that thrived there. The ground was rocky in some places, and rich in others. The grass grew in clumps and patches, with exception of the occasional field.

It wasn't much, but it was mine. In the most literal sense possible, it was MINE.

The Bog-Burglar islands were the ONLY home I ever knew; nestled comfortably between Villainy, a leap away from hysteria, and a bound away Silence.

This was where I took my first shaking steps, where I ran through the marshes, where I stood on the cliff-face, searching for adventure.

You see, there are a few things the Bog-Burglar islands are short of-

Men, bare chins, and silence.

But never, EVER, adventure.

And that, was the area I thrived in- much to the chagrin of my mother.

Adventure was always calling, beckoning me to the ends of the isles, pumping through my veins like battle drums- just as much a part of me as my ears, or fingers, or toes.

Needless to say, I was always, ALWAYS, in trouble of some sorts.

Whether it were from tying Gunnhilde's braids in a knot during the Thor's day Thursday festivities, using the stable dragons to nick sweets from the vendors, or (as you know) breaking into roman fortresses.

But, we'll get into that later.

My mother, she always found me. It took her a while, it really did- but she always found meâ€|

Sooner, or later.

I had gotten used to the waiting, though.

It's hard NOT to get used to waiting whenever you were in need of rescue. (Which I rarely EVER did, thank you very much.) It's hard not to get used to the stares- to the loneliness that eats at you, duller now, after years of smothering its flames.

Because everywhere I went, I got stares.

Even in my own home, or running barefoot through the marketplace, cackling like mad from seeing your Aunt Aldis's hair catch fire while she were roasting her own fish; you happen to acquire strange looks, after that- everyone would.

No-one could figure me out.

Here I was, this exceptionally small girl VIKING; whom, like most every other Vikings, got into trouble.

The catch grew more apparent with each and every year of shenanigans- I was the sort of girl Viking that couldn't STAY out of trouble, you see.

The whole village knew, by my tender age of five, that I was a force to be reckoned with.

They held their valuables down every time I ran hither through the square, and learned to duck out of the way- especially when I was followed by the chief of our tribe; My own mother.

Some days, I couldn't tell whether they loved me or hated me.

I was the ONLY heir to the tribe. I was exceptionally good at Viking-like activities, I was stubborn, I was adventurous, and I was lively to no ends. They went wild at every training exhibition, cheering my name-

"CAMI-CAZI! CAMI-CAZI! CAMI-CAZI!"

I remember the glow, the proud warmth that spread through me like fire with every word of praise.

I knew I was loved.

However, in a sense, I wasn't.

Who could love the girl that burgled everything in sight?

Who could feel loved when your own people ducked for cover whenever they saw you ripping through the streets?

"\_Love is a fickle thing\_," my mother had often told me, while giving her axe a good sharpening.

"\_The love of a people is even fickler\_," she had boomed.

"\_You will be adored one moment, ALWAYS, if you're very clever about it, and detested the next."\_

So, I learned to be loved.

I still got into trouble just as frequently as before. But now, I had learned to cloak myself in secrecy. I learned to be sneaky, to quench my thirst of danger on other islands.

The village people stopped ducking their heads, instead hollering hello over their stands.

\_I was loved\_.

Your world was different- Berk.

My mother often said the name, spitting it out of her mouth like a curse.

Your home was just as similar, land-wise, to mine.

But your people were behind- so behind it was almost humorous. I, for one, have seen my mother chuckling like a seal over the fire and shouts that you could see just \_barely \_from the furthestmost tips of our beaches, like a small orange speck in the horizon.

"\_They're fighting again!"\_ My mother would cackle, tears streaming from her blues eyes as she gasped for breath, "\_They're fighting the DRAGONS!\_"

You see, WE had already learned to train the beasts. It had been in our tribe, the pride of our homeland, for generations.

Our forefathers aimed to quench the beasts like water over a flame, except we had yet to learn that dragons AREN'T too keen on listening.

We gained SOME control, of course, but we were losing our grip fast around that time, not that any-one would ever admit it out loud.

Even though we had held domain over the creatures for as long as anyone could remember, they were starting to rebel. Their fires licked up our crops more and more often, the death toll rose to staggering numbers.

No-one could admit that we were starting to lose the age-old battle.

But, as you probably know, word travels at the speed of molasses from these parts. On our island, rumors lick up the pace fast. But, seeing as your island WAS an entire ocean away, word never really got out.

Except for ONE.

One story flew from the words of our elders, a PROPHECY- and every

ear was desperate to hear.

\_A hero would come, \_they had rasped, \_from Berk.\_

Well, things didn't seem too chippy after that. The thought of one of those weak-spindled Vikings from BERK, of all places, really dampened spirits for a bit.

Because, you and I came from different worlds, we really did.

While you were revoked, ridiculed, a stranger in your own home- I was embraced.

You weren't strong, or ferocious, or violent.

You liked words; some rubbed OFF on me, I'm ashamed to admit.

No-one could figure you out.

I was ten, when the prophesy was told.

I had no idea that it would change the path of my life forever. And I did not, in the LEAST, expect to meet the very boy that the elders had praised.

I remember myself well at that age. My hair had grown uncontrollable- it laughed in the face of braids everywhere, and was the thickest blonde mane any-one had ever seen for a VERY long time. My face was soft yet angular, clever, eyes as blue as my mother's twinkled merrily behind my thick curtains of shining hair, pale eyebrows hanging arched above, ash-blond eyelashes framing them in thick veils.

I was still exceptionally small, though.

I wasn't concerned at all about the troubles everyone knew about.

My heart was a balloon, refusing to be deflated. I was planning to achieve the unimaginable-

I was going to break into a Roman fortress.

## 2. Hearts made up of bricks and stone

\*\*A/N Hello! Thank you so much to my two reviewers! As to the sixty plus visitors mingling in the shadows back there, \*Waggles fingers\* Yes, YOU! Review, please! I still can't believe the array of people that read this story over the weekend- people from all over the world. People from countries that sound like jewels! Where, I come from, is named after a FRUIT. A lousy fruit- not even an interesting one, like an avocado or a KUMQUAT. But, I still love it to shreds- just like Camicazi and the islands. :) Sorry- I have a tendency to rant. \*\*

\*\*I adore you guys, but still- REVIEW! :D\*\*

\*\*Hope you enjoy! LadyM\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I was born a child of this land.<p>

I was nourished by the whistling ferns, I learned to walk by the thick of the marshes, and grew up with the night stars shimmering in my eyes every fortnight as I drifted off to sleep.

You were born a child of your people.

It was they who held the key to your sorrows, and the lock to your unfound joys.

We were both the only ones, the only hope of our parents.

You, if you don't mind me saying so, were the disappointment of your father; and, nonetheless, your entire tribe.

(Well, UP until this bit of my story, but I'll get into that later.)

I, I am proud to say, was the very source for the gray hairs that now intertwine through my mother's silvery plaits.

We were two different people. We came from different homes, were suckled from different loves, and opened our young child-like eyes to different skies.

Yet, somehow, our paths came melting together, dancing in glorious braids around the twine of fate.

HOW was I to appreciate that, at the daft young age of ten?

I didn't, that's how.

I snuck away- I shimmied out the window and paddled away in mum's rowboat in the thick of night. No-one was quite expecting it, I knew. But I still remember the horrible yell my mother let out that resounded off the waves; more than audible to my small ears, despite being several miles away.

I kept rowing on, though; I AM a bog-burglar, you know.

NOTHING can stop me.

I kept my eyes stark open through the dead of night, trained on the steadily growing outline of Fort Sinister, unfolding like crumbly story-pages before my eyes.

Lousy Romans- even I despised them, with their idiotic skirts and dragon nicking habits.

I was planning to nick a dragon right back from under their hairy despicable noses, I was- one of MY very own.

But, for ONCE, things didn't go to plan.

Here I was, this tiny stubborn little tangle of a girl, a VIKING; that, in all her childishly naive refusal to be defeated, was, in fact, defeated.

Captured, to be exact; rotten lot, the whole of them- ROMANS.

They threw me in their topmost cell, with nothing but the straw beneath my fingertips to stare me back in the face.

The first few days, I was alright.

I could almost HEAR my mother's thundering voice in my ear-

'\_Strong you are, Camicazi. STRONG is what you will have to be.'\_

I gazed out the window, out at the churning blue ocean, searching for a ship that never came.

'\_Strong you are, Camicazi,'\_

She was late.

Not that I was WORRIED.

I was getting used to the waiting, to the loneliness.

The next few days, I was aching, positively ACHING to be free.

To be back home, to be running my fingers over the willow-bark tree, to feel the smooth leather hilt of my hunting dagger enclosed tight around my fingers. I found myself missing my mother's morning songs, the busy hum of the town that resonated off the hills, and the glorious cries of praise I received from all those around me in training. Everything I had taken for granted before had now left a huge, gaping HOLE in my chest. A hole I didn't even think I had the capacity to feel began to fill with longing and homesickness, gushing like a deep spring in my heart.

She was late, for the first time EVER.

That was when you came along.

You, and Fishlegs came tumbling through the doorway; two mighty strange looking crabapples, if I'VE ever seen any.

You have no IDEA how pleased I was, to have an excuse to whip up my sword and be able to dodge and gleam and parry, almost as if nothing had changed at all.

Fishlegs was a bust, I snipped the cords of his trousers in no time at all, much to his outrage.

YOU gave me a harder time, I'll admit.

I remember watching you as you fought with me, your rust-colored hair swinging over your olive green eyes, tongue flapping crazily as you tried to explain yourself to me, all-the-while trying desperately to avoid losing a limb.

"ROMANS!" I had cheered terribly at first, "Face me like MEN, you donkeys in skirts!"

It was the MOST fun I had had in WEEKS.

I would have been enjoying myself immensely, if it weren't for the fact that you simply REFUSED to be defeated. It was a tongue-in-cheek situation indeed.

I finally stopped chatting enough to hear you speak between the clangs of metal.

"We-"

\_Dodge.\_

"Don't-"

\_Parry!\_

"WANT to fight!"

\_Pant.\_

"Not ROMAN-"

\_Deflect\_- rats!

"From BERK!"

You sputtered, and I finally lowered my sword, puzzled.

"Just as well," I snapped, "My mother HATES Berk,"

"And MY father hates the Bog-Burglars," You spat, face reddening, sitting down on the cold cell floor.

I smirked and something inside of me broke down. I could hardly believe WE, had something in common, even if it WAS mutual hatred.

I took your hand and helped you up.

"I am ze GREAT Camicazi," I announced, grinning widely.

You turned red as a tomato, and let go of my hand like it were on fire.

"â€|My name's Hiccup," you stated warily, "and THAT-", you gestured to the indignant little crabapple that I had dealt with earlier, "Is Fishlegs- my \_friend\_,"

"Nice to meet you!" I called to the boy.

Fishlegs just huffed and hoisted his leggings up higher.

We were a motley crew, if there ever was one.

You, from Berk.

Fishlegs, from nowhere.

Me, from Bog-burglar islands.

Yet, together, we hatched a plan. Or, I DID, at least.



YOU were the one that got us out of that awful Roman arena, on the day I was certain would be my last. When I had fallen from the riding dragon we nicked, your hand shot out to grab mine like a shot of lightning.

I still remember your eyes, green as the seawater below me, a dark shadow of something that looked curiously like fear flitting in and out of your pupils in the matter of two or so seconds that I fell before you caught me in midair, almost tumbling into certain death. I grasped your fingers even tighter in mine, feeling precariously like a limp rag doll, dangling over the arena full of sharkworms.

For two whole seconds, my life had been in the fate of your hands.

You hoisted me back to the ledge, and we scrambled into a balloon. Yes, A BALLOON!

Mad good inventers, those Romans were, even being as close to the devil as one can come.

We rose, up, and up, and up, higher than my dreams would ever dare to reach.

We were alone, three insignificant pre-teens, floating along the horizon; only a singular speck of color in the entire vast white clouds. Somehow, it managed to steal the very breath away from my lungs, leaving a small fitful blue-jay where my throat would normally be.

My head spun in the unspeakable beauty of it all, with those nearing waves lapping greedily at us, wanting to take us away from this place-to claim us as its own again. I fought to keep my balance and grabbed your forearm, barely keeping upright.

I was there when your father greeted you like a hero for the first time I had ever witnessed, at least. You watched on as my mother and I bickered back like a couple of magpies before she swung me up on her shoulders, glowing, golden-cheeked, and smiling, before the faces of our tribe.

"\_CAMI-CAZI! CAMI-CAZI! CAMI-CAZI!"\_

I couldn't stop grinning to save my life.

Our eyes met for a split second in all the festivities, and I knew, deep down, that you understood. I had a feeling right then and there, from somewhere deep down in my heart- \_HERE is the one that can understand me.\_

And you did, for the most part, of course.

Somehow I already knew that THIS was the first of MANY adventures to come.

And it WAS.

-\\_/-\\_/-\\_/-\\_/-\\_/-\\_/-\\_/-

We were joined at the hip, practically, for the next few

years.

Together- us, the motly-est of ALL motley crews!

Over the next three years we trekked, slid, and skied over vast snowy wastelands, searching for the vegetable-that-must-not-be-named to cure Fishlegs of venomous vorpentinus; when, in the end, it turned out YOU were the one that needed the cure.

I had watched you surf over lava, battle the hairy-scary-librarian on your BIRTHDAY, smite Norbert the Nutjob with a strike of lightning, dragon-whisper (And calm) the most angry of all dragons, and save me, for the second time in my life.

It happened when I was in Hysteria.

Not my most brilliant route, I KNOW.

I know this ESPECIALLY, now, because they had caught me in under a day and had me away in one of those wretched hollow-tree prison thingi-ma-jiggers. The only word to describe those days was- DARK.

All those years ago in Fort Sinister, when I had yearned for my mother's rescue, I now yearned for YOURS. You see, I had a LOT of time to think.

Well, I had a lot of time to do nothing BUT think.

I yearned, just as I had all those times before, to be HOME. To feel applause roll off my back, to feel the bright unrelenting sun upon my neck, to hear my mother rumbling belly-laugh fill the utmost corners of the house.

And- Oh gods, I kept yearned for the old times with you and Fishlegs by my side; my only two friends in the world. I never DID get my dragon from Fort Sinister, but I got YOU guys ; and THAT was as much of a handful I could take, thank you very much.

Not that I minded, particularly.

Things were somewhat different between us three. We were still just as joined at the hip as before, things were almost as normal as before; MINUS the two of you guy's wandering eyes which, I'm quite sure you remember, received a prompt slap in the face.

Fishlegs was taller, now, at fifteen. His shoulders were broader, tawny-brown hair curlier, gait a little less awkward.

You, Hiccup, hadn't changed a BIT. You were taller at fifteen, yes, but you were still thin, even thinner than me. Your hair grew a bit longer than before, and had an aggravating habit of falling in your eyes when we were talking. Your eyes were still the same sea-foam green I saw reflected over the Roman arena three years ago. They were filled with intelligence, questions, and, now, a hunger for acceptance that frightened me to DEATH- and that did not happen often.

I was thirteen, at the time.

Ah, the COVETTED thirteen- it meant much, MUCH more than what you would think, to us Bog-Burglars, but I'll get into that later. For me, it meant the end of my life as I knew it.

I was changing fast, bloody life being as blasted as it is for GIRLS.

I was thickening in places that were as aggravating as it could possibly be, my thoughts morphing into things that I would never even THINK to think before- my hair was even getting SHINY. Oh gods, that was the worst bit- having my hair FUSSED over! You have NO idea.

I tried my best to go back to the small, tangled, FREE little girl I was before, but it simply wouldn't happen. No amount of treachery, rebellion, or haircuts could keep the only body I had known my whole life from growing taller, thinner.

I didn't want the stares- I wanted to be CAMICAZI again.

I would give ANYTHING to have the townsfolk glare at me over their fruit stands again. I would give anything to be that Camicazi again.

My life was cracking at the seams, shifting me in new directions I never wanted to take.

Now, as I sat all alone in the darkness of a hollow tree, I couldn't stop those thoughts from filling my mind, shaking me to the very core.

I knew what was to come as I sat there, dying very, VERY slowly.

I knew that, if I even got out in the first place, I would never see you again.

I curled my knees to my chest, stopping the clammy iron hand that gripped my chest.

'\_Strong you are, Camicazi. STRONG is what you will have to be,'\_

I wished, for just a moment, that it were YOUR voice that filled my ears, instead of my mother's.

I found myself wishing for you; to have you by my side again, just like in the roman hot-air balloon. I wished you were there with me like you were countless times before; being there, so I could lean on you, if I really needed to.

Suddenly, a shining beam of sunlight came rocketing through the air around me- and it was your face I saw, shining with sweat and a relieved grin, peering down at me from a hatch in the world above.

"Hiccup!" I cried, throwing my arms around your neck.

"\_You CAME," \_I whispered, feeling the blush of your cheeks through my embrace.

"Of course I did," you shrugged off, embarrassed.

You ALWAYS came.

Suddenly, a look of inspiration in your eyes, you reached into your vest and pulled out a tiny, shimmering dragon. A real DRAGON, a myriad of colors, unfurled like a spool of thread from his palm, and blinked at me with huge golden eyes.

"Camicazi," you announced, "Meet Stormfly,"

You gave me a DRAGON.

I could scarcely believe it; I seized her in my hands and let her slither around my shoulders and through my hair, tiny wings beating like mad. I blinked back sudden moisture in my eyes.

I must have frightened you quite a bit, standing there silent, just STARING at you, all weepy eyed.

You smiled sheepishly.

"The meatheads breed them- and I knew how much you wanted one- so, I brought you a dragon," you explained quickly as I flew at you, my arms encircling your neck for the second time that day.

Flushing, you gave me your hand to help me run, leaping and innocent, back into the world I knew and thrived in so well.

And then, it was OVER, like a dream dissolved by the screaming morning sun.

The next thing I knew, the three of us were back at meathead bay, shuffling our feet at the crystal sand wedged between our toes.

I realized that, for the first time IN MY LIFE, I had NO idea what to say.

I let out a sudden cry, and threw my arms around you both, hoping and praying that I wouldn't have to let go- not today.

It certainly took you both by surprise, but you both simply stood there and, like the good little crabapples I had trained you to be, hugged me back. Minutes went by, I knew, until you both peeled away.

My sudden outburst wasn't contemplated too much at all, really.

You both thought 'it MUST be because of what she's been through lately'. But I KNEW.

I knew I had to say something, but it WASN'T going to be goodbye.

I couldn't bear to say goodbye.

"\_Hello!"\_ I blurted suddenly, while nestling Stormfly in my knapsack, feeling my mother's grip on my elbow, tugging me firmly back to the ship.

"Hello Fishlegs!" I screamed wildly from deck, "Hello Hiccup!"

I watched you both as you disappeared, Fishlegs' eyebrows crinkled in

confusion, and you with that understanding gleam in your eyes, smiling the sweetest smile I've ever seen cross a persons' lips.

I shook a bit, letting the salty air sting the moisture from me eyes, only letting a singular rogue tear trickle down my trembling cheek as your faces grew tinier and tinier;

Even in our last moments together, you understood me.

You had given me a dream, happiness- and countless adventures.

But now I was leaving all that behind, one thought piercing my mind stubbornly as we glided over the belly of the ocean;

Goodbye was one of MANY little things I never said to you.

### 3. A little glass jar with me inside

What are we made of, really?

No-one can say for sure.

Once, I was made up of all the little things around me.

I was a little glass jar scattered through with bits of meadow grass and foxglove, a sparrow too, for the adventures. Later on, there inside that glass jar, lay a lock of auburn hair and a few shimmering omniscient scales glittering like a thousand eyes back up at me.

That was what made ME.

But I hadn't been ME for a very long time indeed- not since I last saw you, three years ago.

For three years, I was trapped on the islands I once longed to be a part of.

Something shook me apart in those times. I was tipped upside down, everything I knew before sent skittering out that innocent little jar of me, flying away from my outstretched fingertips.

Was THAT love?

It's NOT a rhetorical question, Hiccup.

Was losing all meaning of who I was before just a SIDE effect of this stupid, STUPID fire that pumped through my veins?

I didn't know the answer.

All I knew was that that was how I felt now- BROKEN.

Broken, I was- split in two halves. Not really Camicazi anymore, not really ANYONE.

I spent the next three years of my life WAITING, growing, yearning, learning, and waiting for you to come back to me.

My mother kept telling me to be strong.

The first couple of times, I thought she couldn't POSSIBLY understand how torn I felt- how shattered. But then I saw the recognition in her eyes, when I was having one of my many silent fits I had learned to perfect in those years. I saw the same knowledge, the same UNDERSTANDING in her eyes that I had found in yours, so often.

I realized then- \_what if this was like it was for HER?\_

I realized\_- maybe my mother and I aren't SO different after all.\_

So, slowly but surely, I became strong again.

I forced myself to pull away from the window, to rise and grip my hunting bow again. And never did I see a huger grin on my mother's face, when I brought her back a fresh rabbit from the woods- the first I had killed in months.

I BECAME strong.

I bathed, put on my daily tunic, pulled my frustratingly long hair back into a sloppy knot, and headed back out into the public market for the first time since my return.

I was greeted with cheers.

To them, I was still Camicazi- THEIR Camicazi.

You know what I thought to myself, right then and there? When I began to glow, to feel the warmth and LOVE of their voices fill me to the core?

I made a promise to myself, holding my head high for the first time in what seemed like forever-

\_If I cannot be strong for me, then I will be strong for THEM.\_

I embraced my old life of endless training in a haze, only feeling the slight dent of pressure responsibility had left on my shoulders whenever I saw a hungry child in the marketplace, whenever the crops failed and all else seemed hopeless.

I gave them HOPE, I did.

I brought them deer, wild geese, rabbits, FOXES- anything to fill their plates during the harsh winter months.

Hard callouses bubbled over my thumb where the hilt of my sword and the bow of my arrow had rubbed the skin raw.

I remember seeing those wounds, reminding myself of the wounds that would NEVER heal- the ones that I never showed anyone, for THOSE wounds were on my heart.

I caught myself nearly daily, on the third year. I caught myself thinking of you- it was hard NOT to, of course; the dragon of YOUR nicking WAS permanently attached to my shoulders, going in for the kill like a rainbow cartwheel in the sky whenever I asked her

to.

You brought me a MOOD dragon; you knew that- didn't you?

She was quite backwards though, my Stormfly.

She never portrayed MY moods, only her own- and she had acquired a knack for Norse that I couldn't quite place. She would go on chattering away from my shoulders as I hunted, turning brilliant vermillion in some places, a glorious scarlet in another.

Reminded me constantly of those days back then, she did.

WE became our own motley crew, she and I.

The dragon that never stopped talking, and the human that had nothing better to do, than LISTEN.

Just the same, too, because I was starting to hear stories.

The same stories that poured from the lips of our elders all those years ago came floating back to us, whispering tales of a hero from Berk, blowing over salty wave crests strait to our shore in the lips of traders.

They spoke of the one from Berk, the foretold one- the boy that would save us all.

My mother refused to tell me a word of it, much to my fury. It seemed everywhere I went, pairs would look up at me with frightened eyes, obviously discussing the story that NO-ONE would DARE tell me.

I remember seeking out the first trader that spoke an off-hand whisper of the hero, bombarding him with questions of the boy every corner of the isles was murmuring about; but, the trader said-

"I would MUCH rather do something MOREâ€¦ with you, than tell a story." With a grin like a fox, he tried to slip an arm around my waist.

So, I pressed my dagger to his throat, and grinned as he whimpered at the blade and the untrained fury in my eyes.

"\_TELL \_me the STORY," I repeated, my voice a low growl.

Trembling, he did.

He wove the story with his tongue, telling me tales of the small young man from Berk-

"He- He was the teenager that no-one expected anything from, no good, really, even though 'e was heir to the throne."

I swallowed hard, feeling dizzy, and dug the blade in deeper, a ruby red drop of life streaming thinly down the man's neck, urging him to continue.

The words came spilling out of his mouth again,

"The boy claimed he ha' CAUGHT a dragon- but no-one had believed him.

Berk ha' been a' war with the creatures for MANY years now, much like YOUR people are NOW, eh love?"

He stuttered, giving me a slimy smile, and I had to fight from ending his life right then and there.

"Turns out, he HAD caught one a' the beasts- a NIGHT fury!"

I smiled; the night fury was the most prized, and FEARED, dragon of them all.

"He TRAINED it- RODE it, befriended it, even! It was unlike an 'thing ANYONE had EVER seen!"

"His da' was FURIOUS, though-" The man continued,

"After the lad tried to convince them to give dragons another chance, the chief locked 'im up! He used the beast to guide his armada strait to the dragon's nest, to destroy them once and for all. But there was a catch-"

The man's eyes gleamed at me, but I was too engrossed in my thoughts to notice- something crazily familiar was stirring in the pit of my stomach; something I couldn't quite place.

"There was a BIGGER dragon. One that would give even the strongest of men nightmares for weeks- a winged spawn of the devil, if there e'er was one."

"The chiefs' son knew all about it- he gathered up all the other teenagers and they flocked to the island on the backs of dragons. They were too late, though- the beast had already been provoked."

"Working together, the teens managed to distract the thing as the boy reunited with his dragon. Together they flew, and the great beast followed them, up higher than any cloud."

"They fought for what seemed like AGES- no-one could see what was happening. All they knew, was that the sky had suddenly turned to ink around them."

"Suddenly- they emerged. The beast was on FIRE, swooping in after him were the two heroes, looking like fleas in comparison."

My eyes widened, pulse quickening like a stream.

The mans' voice dropped to a whisper, clearly engrossed in the story.

"\_They fell, INTO the fire. \_\_Into the mouth of the burning remains of the beast itself."\_

My heart dropped like lead into my stomach, hungry to hear the next verses.

"They looked dead, they did; the Night Fury- TOOTHLESS, he was called- lay alone in the smoldering ashesâ€¦ the boy absent from his side. The boy's father was heartbroken, he was. He crouched like a beggar at the beasts' side, weeping like any mournful soul. THEN, the



dragon lifted his wings-

I inhaled sharply,

"And there, lay the boy- all he had lost was a FOOT. A FOOT was all it cost, to restore peace to the great isle," he chuckled ironically.

"He got the respect of the tribe, his pet, he e'en got the GIRL,"

My blood went cold.

The light left the mans' eyes, as his story was finished, and he looked a bit annoyed.

"Is THAT what you wanted to hear?" he snapped irritably.

I just nodded, still confused.

"What was the boy's name?" I whispered fiercely.

The man glared at me, licking his lips in thought.

"His name was Hiccup,"

My whole body went numb as stone.

"Hiccup," I repeated softly, anger seeping into my pores with every passing second.

The stiff ocean air seemed to be pressing in on me from all sides, like I was trapped.

\_I need to get OUT of here.\_

And I did, pulling my dagger from the mans' throat and running like I never had before, never even stopping until I had burst into the cottage door, giving my mother a fright.

"HICCUP." I cried, glaring into her confused blue eyes, crinkled with perplexion.

"Now, Camicazi-" she began to scold.

"Don't!" I interrupted, wringing my hands into tight fists.

"Don't say a WORD,"

She said not a word.

I took a step closer, surveying her like a cat may size up a mouse.

"I waited THREE years, mother-" I began, my voice dangerously steely. "THREE years. Three years, for WHAT?" I yelled.

"To be PREPARED \_for MARRIAGE\_." I spat, ignoring the look of pain that flashed across her face as if she'd been slapped.

"I survived, mom, I really did." I hissed, lowering my tone.

"I THRIVED- after I was taken from the life I knew and loved. I was strong when I was taken away from my TWO BEST FRIENDS. My first  
1-"

My voice broke, and she encircled me in her arms, smelling of cinnamon and cooking herbs from the broth that was hung over the fire.

"I had a RIGHT to know what happened to him!" I murmured, wary steel carving a dull edge in my words.

"I had a\_ RIGHT\_."

"Hush, love," she cooed softly, holding my blonde hair away from my tear-streaked face.

I then realized how much was expected of me, and the gravity pressed like a lead weight into my soul, pinning my feet like tar into the floor.

"\_I don't want to get married, mom."\_ I cried.

"Three days, love" she murmured, her voice strained and tight.

"You will see him in three days- at the passage ceremony,"

But I already knew that.

It was the only thing that kept me holding my head high, the hope that I would someday see him again.

"I \_know\_," I whispered, muffled by her soft cotton swathed shoulder.

"But what if he \_doesn't come?\_"

My mother didn't say another word, just stood there; rocking me back and forth in her arms gently, as if she were afraid I would sprout wings and soar away like a caged bird.

She didn't say a word- she didn't need to.

#### 4. The little rules to which we abide

\*\*A/N I know, I said this was going to be a threeshot- but now I think it'll be more of a five-shotâ€| this has really grown on me, and it's killing me to think of completing it! :( \*\*

\*\*I want to thank my AMAZING reviewers :) You guys make me want to write more :D\*\*

\*\*So, here's the next chapter; angst-y and bitter and a bit sad all at onceâ€| hope it's not confusing :P\*\*

\*\*Feel free to PM me with questions, and MORE than free to press that shiny little review button down there :)\*\*

\*\*The poem is: You are the stars- by Eternal

dreamer.\*\*

\*\*Disclaimer- wish I did own it, but I don't :(\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>I felt like I was now a glass figurine, with crystalline skin so thin you could see right through it.<p>

So vulnerable, my glass body somehow waking up, trudging to the bath-house, and letting them strip me down like a jay-bird to cover in oils and mysterious potions; not feeling anything- numb, but oh-so breakable.

I knew- oh, I KNEW how important it was for me to be strong, at that moment, if ANY.

But for once in my life, I couldn't fight back.

Because my time was coming, I knew, and there was not a single thing I could do to stop it.

I could feel it in every fiber of my being, every pore of skin that hadn't already been scrubbed away by prying eyes and weary hands.

A song, a small verse of a distant memory, came swirling in from the bottom of my mind like the happy singings of a sparrow's song carried in the wind-

"\_Oh my dear, my morning star- you came so unexpectedâ€|\_

\_Oh my dear, my evening star- you left me on a path, misdirectedâ€|"\_"

I lulled softly, as I twirled a lone pale finger through the glassy surface of the water I was engulfed in; the village-women glanced at me for a moment, but paid no mind.

They wrung their frothy sponges over me, swathing me from head to toe with the musky scent of wild roses, as my voice tumbled low and sweet throughout the small bath-house.

"\_Oh my dear, my blazing star- you filled my eyes with your lightnessâ€|\_

\_Oh my dear, my fallen star- you've disappeared in your brightnessâ€|"\_"

It was a song my father had taught me.

Strange that it had come back to me, right then; ME, singing a song of loss on the day of what would be MY father's greatest loss- if he had cared.

I shuddered, sinking back down into the foamy water only to be pulled out again into the harshly dry air by Auntie Aldis, who handed me a cotton wrap to drape over my blushing neck.

The women stood there, of all ages and sizes, beaming and smiling like I was their prized cow on market day.

And sadly, in a way, I WAS.

I gave them a faltering smile, feeling too weak to scowl.

In a rush of motherly embraces they ushered me back down the hill to our cottage, slipping and sliding from the suds swaddling their calloused feet.

I let the stark fresh air dry my skin as easily as a fleece over fire, smiling into the salty air breezes that wrapped me in an embrace that felt more familiar, more luxurious even, than my own mother's.

I stopped for just a moment, to breathe it all in.

\_Will I even be the same person tomorrow that I am today?\_

The thought alone was enough to make me want to turn and run.

Once inside, the women swarmed like magpies over my embarrassingly bare body; in a frantic flurry of twittering, poking, prodding, and chuckling they slid the clean white cotton dress over my shoulders and shoved me out into the entrance room, standing utterly numb in front of my mother.

Silence, utter silence greeted my ears.

I watched in horror as my mother's eyes went glassy with moisture.

\_Not YOU too\_, I groaned inwardly.

"She's got the stars in her, she does," my mother whimpered, as I stood before her, feeling naked as a jaybird.

I sighed and tried not to pull at my hair the aggravating village-women must have combed a THOUSAND times and, as per my request, left hanging loosely down to my waist; only a single blonde braid was snaked around my forehead like a woven hairband.

I took one look into the looking glass and pulled away, dumbstruck.

THAT was not Camicazi I had seen in the surface- it was some-one else. It had to be.

Is that who I was now?

I looked again- nope. NOT possible.

The girl I had seen in the mirror looked every bit the Viking heir everyone expected me to be- poised. Flawless, even- as if she'd never had to lift a finger in her entire life.

So unlike me, in so many ways; yet, I couldn't stop staring at her.

Somewhere, deep in my stomach, I felt a small flutter of beating wings that rung out with a melody of hope.

The girl in the looking glass stared back at me, peeking through her slim white fingers. Eyes as blue and deep as the ocean framed her small heart-shaped face, pink robust cheeks and lips scrubbed as red as a fading sun dancing in the eve.

Her hair hung in liquid blonde waves down to her waist, one lone braid wrapped simply 'round her porcelain forehead like a crown; exactly as how I had requested earlier.

The girls' pure white dress fell in swarthy folds down around her toes, hugely draping sleeves murmuring in the springy breeze; a small intertwined cord made of the bog-burglar colors hung in dancing threads of deep purple and green and brilliant ice-blue draped around her invisible waist.

My heart felt like it was going to beat out of my chest right then, it did.

I looked beautiful- for the first time in my life.

Over the pounding in my lungs, I caught snippets of "oohs," and "ahhs," that came from the dry lips of the village-women that lingered behind me.

But a singular hiss stood out from all the rest, its speaker unbeknownst to me still:

"\_Too thin, too weak,"\_

The voice rasped maliciously.

"\_She will never bear us an heir!"\_

I had to fight the urge to whirl around and fight back like I would have on any other day.

On any other day, I would have withdrawn the dagger cleverly concealed in my bodice and rip the voice- more important, whom the voice BELONGED to- to shreds.

But not that day.

That day I had to be more; so much more than I thought it was possible for me to be.

I had to be more than just Camicazi- not just ZE great Camicazi;

I had to become Camicazi the great.

I had to become Camicazi the leader, Camicazi the regal, Camicazi the queen, Camicazi the adult- Camicazi the perfect.

How could I be everything I WASN'T all at once?

I wondered if you would still understand me, now.

After I had changed so much, I couldn't even recognize myself.

I gave mother my hand and she smiled softly at me, her cheeks

wrinkling around her maddeningly knowing blue eyes.

We made our way to the hall, step by step.

I craned my neck as the salty air grew thicker, frantically searching the crystal blue shoreline for him, but saw not a whisper.

Stormfly hovered around my shoulders, peering at me pityingly with those bottomless gold eyes of her.

I pushed her away, nerves pulsing through my veins like a fever.

I told myself, as I shunned my only available friend, that I didn't NEED her pity.

Honestly, do you know how remarkably SAD it is to be PITIED by a DRAGON?

>Let me put it this way- dragons are pitiless little souls; if they look at you with pity, then you KNOW you are a pretty pathetic crabapple, if there ever was one.<p>

I set my jaw, widened my eyes, let the sunshine enthrone my head like a halo as I approached the square.

Every eye was on me, they really were.

Every knowledgeable chief, from every blighted tribe, with every blasted available heir was present that day; and every last one of them stared at me with their mouths hanging as wide as lobster pots.

I didn't just show up- I GLOWED.

I glided with all the grace I could muster, feeling the nerves simmer like malted silver in my veins, letting it propel me forward, through the heavy wooden doors.

I let it push me to my seat at the head of the room, a beautiful chair, intricate to the very last detail. Tiny flowers encircled the arms, as dancing carved trees reached out with their towering branches as they wound up, and up, twisting and gliding through the legs and back of my throne.

Every girl I had known from my childhood, aged sixteen, sat around me in smaller chairs of their own; each one carved in the emblems of their families. Each girl sat, glowing and stone-like all at once, careful not to betray a single emotion as they watched me ascend the stage, taking my throne as heir to their tribe- as their future leader and chief.

Deep down, they looked every bit as scared as I did.

NOW was my time; but, in the same stomach-wrenching way, it was THEIR time too.

I sat, feeling the applause ripple and echo through that glass body of mine, not really feeling a thing- just waiting.

\_Please come, you.\_

\_I mean it- I really, REALLY, do.\_

I heard not a name as the heirs were announced to me in a sickening blur of admiring smiles, sly winks, and red cheeks.

Bloody BOYS, every last one of them.

Then, the line was up- and a cold, hard stone dropped into my stomach.

"\_Over!" \_The village girls exhaled around me gratefully.

I could not return their relief- my LIFE felt over.

I wrung my fingers silently from my clothed white lap, biting back pain like poison to my heart.

YOU hadn't come back for me.

And you know what I realized?

I realized, as I sat on that impossibly public chair with my eyes glossing over the crowd on the night that would carve the path of my life from then on- that all I really DID was wait for you.

That whole time, the whole blighted day as I was buffed, and pricked, and plucked over, the only consolation I had was the hope that I would hear your name called out on the endless line of "Hopefuls".

>I was only listening for one name- for YOURS.<p>

I waited for YOU.

For three years I waited- before that, even, in the tree of my not-so-story-book childhood.

You always came- but, this time, you were late.

You shouldn't worry about ME though; I'd gotten quite used to the waiting&€|to the loneliness.

My mother nodded at me, out of the corner of my eye, silently telling me to rise for the dancing.

I fought like the devil to stop my fingers from trembling as I stood up; somewhere to my left, the cobbler's pipes wheedled out the low strains of a festive jig.

A boyishly calloused hand took mine in his, and he let me descend down the three steps, onto the dance floor.

Somehow, my hand rose itself to drape over the boy's shoulder, and somehow, my eyes stopped looking but started seeing the wild colors around me, and the human being I was holding onto as we danced.

He wasn't TOO bad, for a boy.

He didn't gaze at me like a forlorn puppy, just kept my hand in his as we skimmed over the hardwood floor, weaving in and out of the laughing twirling bodies around us like we were loomers weaving a

tapestry of life.

Not TOO bad looking either, he was.

I figured, right then and there, that if you even BOTHERED to show up, that THIS was how I wanted you to see me;

I WANTED you to see me in the arms of a stranger, dancing like I hadn't a care in the world, nor a worry in my heart.

I wanted you to know how I had survived without you. Not only that, but how I had THRIVED without you.

The boy and I started talking in between breaths, and I caught a sliver here and there, enough to know that his name was "Thuggery" and something vague about "heir to the meatheadsâ€|"

Yadda, yadda, yadda.

I decided that THIS boy was much better SEEN than HEARD.

Would you still understand me now, Hiccup?

Would YOU know why I even bothered to dance with this blubbering donkey of a human being?

I smiled bitterly, silently, drowning in my answer; \_I guess you'll never know- NOW, will you, Camicazi?\_

But then, I saw something over Thuggery's shoulder that made my blood run dead-cold, and my glass body flinch as if it had been struck.

I saw YOU.

I stopped breathing, I did, my heart slammed up against my windpipe, refusing to budge.

I saw you on the balcony, alone, just staring off the edge.

A deafening roar of applause thundered in my ears, making me almost choke from the sudden intake of air. The song ended, melting into yet another folk dance.

I pushed Thuggery's hands away mutely, and found myself right behind you.

\_What if, what if, what if'\_s hammered in my mind, making my heart falter as I shoved them as far away as possible.

"You \_came," \_I finally blurted, stupidly, and you turned around, startled.

I thought I had made a mistake-

THIS man could not be Hiccup, I had thought.

This man was lean, but lanky and tall. Small, thin muscles, instead of bulging ones, pressed through his green jerkin. A smattering of freckles dotted his nose and cheeks, chin jutting out with a kind of small cleft, his lips puckered open into a shocked O. He had to lean



a little to right, because of a cleverly concealed prosthetic sticking out from under his leggings. His hair was cut boyishly and long strands kept falling into his eyes, oh- the eyes.

It WAS youâ€¦

You still had the same eyes, you did.

You looked terrified that I had spoken, fumbling nervously to look gentlemanly and noble- and FAILING at it, might I add.

You cleared your throat awkwardly but didn't stop staring at me, stuttering.

"Iâ€¦ uhâ€¦" you stumbled around for the right words, "â€¦ of course Iâ€¦ came,"

I smiled, warmth spreading through my entire body at your words.

I stepped closer; gazing at you like it was the last time I would ever lay eyes on your face.

"Oh gods, Hiccup," I murmured, staring up into your sea-foam green eyes, "you have NO idea how much I missed you,"

"I'm sorryâ€¦" your voice cracked, "But, umâ€¦ who are you?"

Maybe, had it been another day, I'd have shrugged it off.

But that day the fire consumed me, licked me up with its angry tongue.

What felt like a mixture of confusion and pain and fury all at once surged through me, sloshing around in my glass body, now more fragile than ever.

I bared my teeth, stepping forward- this time, very WISELY, you backed up.

"Youâ€¦ ARSE," I hissed, and you looked more terrified than ever before, backing up against the railway.

"You have the GAUL to SHOW up- and, and-"

"Don't!" you pleaded frantically, "pleaseâ€¦?"

I stopped moving then, and you stared at me, your eyes clouding over in thought as mine bored into yours like hellfire. I stared into your eyes as you stared into mine; mouthing silent words, you slowly lifted your finger to my cheek and stroked away a piece of hair.

My eyes widened in shock at the feeling of your fingers on cheek, light as air.

Your eyes clouded, confusion and thoughts mixing in with the stormy green.

"You look soâ€¦ \_familiar\_"

You whispered, just as shocked as I was.

I turned away, willing myself not to show emotion.

\_Chiefs do not FEEL. Feelings are for SOFTIES; \_I reminded myself as I wrung my hands like a vice, my nails carving blood-red streaks across my alabaster palms.

You turned me around again, our eyes met for a good ten seconds before I had to look away for the fear of being scorched by their intensity.

Bloody BOYS.

"\_Camicazi?" \_you murmured.

I said not a word- I had decided not to give you the satisfaction.

"Camicazi!" you cried, turning me around again for the second time.

I stared at the ground- I KNEW that look.

THAT look meant I was being analyzedâ€¦ again.

Your mouth puckered in a tiny O as you looked me up and down, blushing like mad. I sighed and propped my arms on the balcony rail.

"Oh gods, you lookâ€¦" you stuttered again, "â€¦Your \_hair!"\_

I glared at you, sending you taking another cautious step backwards.

"It's soâ€¦" you fumbled around for the right word, and my grimace slowly melted into a more-or-less-welcoming smirk, "â€¦\_shiny,"

—

"Yes, YOU look quite shiny as well," I shot back, a slightly bitter edge tinting the teasing tone my voice.

You cleared your throat, and joined my side in staring longingly out at the open air.

The silence swallowed us whole, and I felt as though I were drowning in it, so nervous I was.

"How's Fishlegs?" I finally asked, all too polite and dull for my taste.

"He's getting marriedâ€¦" you answered distractedly.

"Of course," I sighed, "Wouldn't've expected much more from you men,"

You looked at me, chewing your lip thoughtfully.

"Isn't that the whole point of this ceremony, Camicazi?" you wheedled, "So YOU can marry?"

"Fa," I snapped, "I'll NEVER marry anyoneâ€¦ too much work, it is,"

We both sighed, and I was suddenly aware that the air between us was tense, almost foreign.

"And, you?" I stated.

"And me, what?" you asked, confused.

"ARE you?"

"Am I, WHAT?"

"Getting MARRIED?" I cried, a grin foiling my plot for an all-bitter exterior.

"Oh," you coughed, rubbing the back of your neck, a pale red blush crawling up your neck.

I felt myself look into your eyes again, but this time you couldn't meet my own. I felt a small dying beat in my heart- the hope that I had scorched with my pain.

"â€¦yeah," you answered finally.

"Yeah, I am,"

My delicate glass body felt shattered; my heart lay still and frozen.

"Oh." I said dully.

"Married," I parroted.

"Yep," You said abruptly.

"So soon?" I asked dully.

"Yeah," you answered.

"I'mâ€¦ happy for you, Hiccup," I lied through my clenched teeth.

"Seems likeâ€¦ a LOT has happened sinceâ€¦" I continued, trailing off.

"Since you LEFT," you asserted, voice breaking slightly.

"I HAD too," I murmured.

You turned and stared at me, for once, I didn't think you understood me.

"No," you prodded sharply, "You DIDN'T."

The silence engulfed us like a flame once more.

"Why didn't you tell us?" you broke out suddenly.

"Tell you what?" I pried dryly, my throat felt much too old and heavy to move.

"That you were going to LEAVE!" you cried, almost frantically.

I flinched, feeling your gaze steadily burn into my cheeks.

"You didn't even say goodbye!" you added, your arms flying out in elaboration.

"Hiccup-" I pleaded softly, but you didn't seem to hear me.

"You could've at LEAST, told us WHY! WHEN, even!"

"Hiccup-" I repeated, feeling like lead weights were pressing in on me from all sides.

"I mean, oh gods, Camicazi- none of us knew! Iâ€¦ I thought you were DEAD, for all you had told us!"

"HICCUP!" I shouted.

My mouth plumed open in shock, and you stared back at me, seemingly mortified at what you had revealed.

"â€¦dead?" I echoed faintly, and I felt you sit on the railing next to me with a heavy sigh.

"Yeah," you murmured.

My heart had started to pulse again, just barely.

"Did you REALLY think I couldn't have POSSIBLY survived three years on bog-burglar islands?"

I asserted, nudging your shoulder teasingly.

"You must not have known the MOST important bit of me after all, Hiccup,"

"Oh?" you answered, "And what would that be?"

I leaned in close, smiling softly at the way your eyes widened in alarm.

"I'm a \_survivor\_," I breathed, my words blowing slightly on your neck.

"â€¦ But, just barely." I admitted, hardly audible over the strain of pipes coming from inside.

It was then you turned to me, our noses not an inch apart.

A dozen alarm bells pounded in my head, but I heard not a sound; all I could hear was you breathing, steady and faint on my neck.

I felt myself floating back to that day in the snow with my father, when he had looked at me like I was the craziest thing possible.

You stared at me with the same look, with melting eyes you pressed

your lips onto mine, soft at first; as if you were afraid I'd shatter into a million pieces- in awe.

My whole body took off, as if I were glowing, floating into the skies above. Floating up, higher than my daydreams had ever dared.

"Hiccup?" I breathed while we broke apart.

"Yeah?"

"Don't get married,"

I felt my hands sub-consciously float up to the nape of your neck; gripped the hair that grew there in handfuls, soft and fine.

You pressed your lips to mine again and I felt our teeth clack together at the force you were pressing into me; you kissed me harder, with an almost desperate, lost, sense of pressure.

You pulled away suddenly, and we both exhaled at the same time, my heart pounding like ocean waves in my ears.

"Oh gods, I'm sorryâ€|" you rasped, standing up suddenly.

"Don't beâ€|" I pleaded, my voice faint, "Please don't be,"

"I'm \_sorry\_," you repeated, as you turned around and took one of my hands in yours;

Your eyes had the same look they always held, for the first time that night- understanding.

Understanding was all I remembered of you as I pulled away, streaking back to the ceremony; numb as I sat down at my throne again.

I sat there again, my eyes glazing over like melted pottery.

I was not broken.

But I was close- damned close to it.

But there's one thing I had learned about myself those past three years-

I am a SURVIVOR.

No matter how hard I tried that night not to break down, I stayed strong as the heirs and their fathers visited me, one-by-one; each of them bidding for my hand.

I stayed strong as I watched Thuggery win the bid by a landslide. How many blighted cows was I worth ANYWAY?

I stayed unyielding as my new husband gripped me by the waist, shouting and celebrating with the rest of the hall.

I watched you as you disappeared out the oak doors, a dead look in your eyes.

I watched your ship glide away into the dark night, and I kept every emotion out of my face when I saw you standing at the dock; shouting something, frantically, that I couldn't hear.

I breathed out slowly, watched as you turned away.

You didn't look back- and neither did I.

I felt a cold hard thud in my chest as Thuggery pulled me back towards the celebration.

I knew then, at that awful empty feeling in my chest, that I had lost much more than the one I loved.

My mother's voice floated back to me, daunting my ears,

'\_She's got the stars in her, she does'\_

Whatever I had had before- whether it be light, beauty, or life- was gone, vanished by the light of the prying moon.

I lost my stars.

## 5. Letters written and walls anew

I built my new world with walls.

I broke down every bridge, burned every trinket of the past.

I watched the cities crumble before me, and saw new ones rise out of the ground, up out of the ashes.

I watched my childhood fade like scattered dust in the wind.

I felt my new self take form, felt it burn and rage in the afternoon sun and finally, take over me; raw skin, broken heart, scars and all.

I built my new heart with walls, I did.

It was dark that night, darker than I could possibly remember.

You didn't know it, of course; but as you sailed back to your home, I was struggling for my sanity.

You see, I wasn't in a good place that day; YOU had pushed me down- Thuggery had pinned me to the floor.

You, mentally.

Him, literally.

He stumbled through the doorway, wobbled drunkenly; wrapped his hands around my waist as I flailed in his arms like a fish wrapped in a net. I craned my head as far back as possible, trying to avoid those lips that buried themselves in my hair.

I shoved him away- furious, indignant- and he paused.

I didn't think he'd DO much, I did.

But next thing I knew, his hand had collided with my ribcage and I was flat on the floor.

Pain ripped through me, and I clenched my teeth as my jaw hit the cold, hard surface.

He had knocked me over like I was nothing but a paper doll, lost in the wind. But I was STRONGER than that- I HAD to be, you know.

It's in my blood.

And when anyone, ANYONE, makes a bog-burglar feel weak, it just might be the last mistake of their life.

YOU made me feel insignificant- replaceable.

Thuggery was nothing; he was only the last straw.

I breathed out readily and scrambled to my feet, fighting to find distinguishing shapes in the darkness.

Thuggery whipped me around and buried his head in my neck, as I sunk my nails into his forearms, trying desperately to push him away.

"Come on, 'cazi," he slurred. "Stop it,"

And that night- on the night of our "wedding"- in the midst of my new husbands stupid drunken fumbling's and complaining's, I pinned him to the wall with my sword.

"\_Don't touch me,"\_ I snarled, spitting tangled locks of hair out of my mouth, pressing the blade further into his neck till the skin gave way and a tiny ruby-red drop of blood gleamed back at me.

"\_EVER\_ again,"

His eyes darted around, the brown of his pupils glinting like dark orbs through the blood-shot whites, flickering in the darkness.

I bared my teeth at him as he started to sink to the ground, unconscious.

"Do you understand me?" I hissed, and his head lolled to the side. Growling, I pinned his head upright against the wall, forcing his eyes to stare back into mine.

Thuggery nodded, and I let him go, stopping to stare at the metal curve of my withdrawn sword glinting in the darkness.

I sighed, and held it up to my eyes. The polished blade was simple and flawless, minus the teardrop of crimson lifeblood that streamed down one side.

You know how I remember my wedding night, TO THIS DAY?

I remember it as pain, and bloody swords; poetic, isn't it?

My young eyes travelled down the sword to the gilded wooden hilt. I traced the outline of childishly carved letters in the dulled wood, memory fresh and painful as ever- \_Ze GrEaT CaMiCaZi.\_

\_GREAT, 'Cazi. \_I cursed myself inwardly, \_What have you done THIS time?\_

I pulled myself up off the floor, and let the sword fall with a clang. I wanted to get away from it, away from HIM.

I stepped quickly over the creaking floorboards and sat on the craved wooden bed without so much of a sound omitting from my cleverly trained feet.

A dull thud echoed from the far side of the room where Thuggery had fallen asleep, limp as a rag doll, reminding me that I was alone- for the second time that night.

It's NOT the way MOST brides spend their wedding nights, you know.

But, I'm not MOST people.

I collapsed to my side and curled a heavy quilt up around me like a swaddling cloth.

"What 'm I gonna do?"

I whispered to the night air, wishing like hell that there were some-one there that could answer me.

But there wasn't.

Cautiously, I pulled out the notebook from my gaping sleeve and held it gingerly between my palms; I traced the small leather cover and held it up to the moonlight, white sunbeams streaming through the fly-away pages.

Finally, I read the cover and felt the looming shadow of sadness fall over me again- I choked it back.

\_How to train your dragon.\_

\_By- Hiccup H.H. III\_

I ran my fingers over the childish indentions, and peeled it open to the first page.

Dragons carved out in charcoal strokes jumped out at me, becoming longer, more graceful, as the pages went on.

Sketches of Hideous Zipplebacks baring their teeth, Gronckles with claws the size of dinner platters, and a lone, glorious Night fury. Underneath its smiling cat eyes, I read the name- \_Toothless.\_

I chuckled to myself- You never COULD stay away from the dangerous ones.

Evenâ€| well, ME.



With eager fingers, I parted the lips of the next page and saw a childish drawn sketch of a girl.

She smiled back up at me, completely unaware of the paper boundaries that entrapped her forever; her hair was tangled to monstrous heights, mouth pulled into a cheeky grin, staring blatantly at me with wide smiling eyes, arms laden with assorted weaponry.

Beneath the drawing, I read the name- \_Camicazi.\_

I felt my breath catch at my lips, I did.

And then I saw another sketch- then another;

Sketches of Camicazi riding downhill on a sled with a terrified looking boy with hair that stood on end.

Sketches of Camicazi on the shoulders of her mother, glowing and proud, shouting something that had long since been forgotten.

Sketches of Camicazi sword fighting with men three times her size.

Camicazi sailing off to an unknown destination with the same skinny boy, her eyes full of quiet obedience, and his full of determination.

Camicazi at the bottom of a hollow tree, surrounded by darkness.

Camicazi hugging the same strange-haired boy, both of them flushed and a bit embarrassed.

Camicazi waving goodbye from the deck of \_The Victorious\_ to two boys on a beach. A small line is drawn from her lips, the scrawling grey print reading- \_'Hello!'.\_

I turn the page, mouth dry as cotton, and come across a sketch of another girl.

This girl scowls up at me, her pert face framed in straight locks of flyaway hair that is woven into a thick plait; her eyes were framed with thick lashes and narrowed, as if she were surveying something on the horizon. She leans on a traditional Berk fighting axe, her svelte figure encased in such armor that it would have looked preposterous if she had worn it anywhere other than Berk, of course. She gave off the air of beauty- of being beautiful and KNOWING it, harnessing it to throw others off the scent of her apparent Viking-demeanor.

Clever, the way he drew her.

Quick, the way my heart split off the hinges when I read the name scrawled beneath her leather- encased feet- \_Astrid.\_

Drawings of Astrid in training, dousing fires in the village.

Drawings of Astrid with flowers in her hair and laughter in her eyes,

dancing with other village girls on Freya's spring feast day.

Drawings of Astrid dangling off a tree branch, scowling up at me again.

Astrid on the back of none other than Toothless, arms encircled around a skinny boy's waist, and her head buried in his neck.

Astrid beaming in the doorway of a cottage, a small ring glinting on her outspread fingers.

And then, nothing.

Nothing but blank pages stared back at me.

"\_Oh gods," \_I cursed under my breath and pressed my head into a pillow, refusing to acknowledge the pounding in my temples or the throbbing pain in my chest.

I fell asleep with your last sketch clutched tightly in my hands- a sketch of a little girl dangling off the ledge of a hot air balloon; the blurred image of the boy tipping precariously over the edge, holding fiercely onto one of her hands.

The next thing I knew, I found myself staring into Stormfly's golden eyes.

Pity- nothing but PITY in her gaze again, blighted dragon.

Finally, I had to get up and acknowledge her presence, hiding the fist with your drawing inside of it under the covers.

Stormfly opened her mouth and a letter fell into my lap, moist and crumpled.

I unfolded the salt-licked paper with a crumble, and scanned over the sloping script with dazed eyes:

\_Camicazi-\_

\_I know you stole it. I would like it back, please.\_

\_Hiccup\_

I chuckled to myself, I did- because YOU, my friend, are so, SO predictable.

I swung my feet off the bed, flexing my short pale toes in the new sunlight, and stepped down as quietly as I could muster.

I ripped off my dress, shoved it in the kitchen cupboard, and yanked on a pale blue jerkin. The soft cotton nipped at my ankles, and I tugged the belt tighter so that it could hold my sword.

I threw open the back door, and I ran.

I ran and ran and ran-

I knew that, someday, I would have to STOP, you know.

With trembling fingers, I began to write.

\_Hiccup-\_

\_You should know that I read every single page.\_

\_Really, known me for so long and you STILL can't even remember to keep your pockets empty?\_

\_Here, you can have the "shiny".\_

\_I don't need it anymore.\_

\_Yours occasionally, \_

\_CaMiCaZi\_

With that, I withdrew my sword and cut at the nape of my neck with a flourish.

I watched the beams of gold fall to the grass around me silently, almost as if they were moving through syrup.

I sent you a lock of my hair, and watched as Stormfly flew away, my heart in ink trapped firmly between her teeth.

I knew that, someday, I would have to STOP running, you know.

But not that day.

Stopping could wait for another day, it could.

I built my new world with walls.

I built it carefully yet violently, throwing myself into my work with a child-like awe.

I broke down every bridge, burned every trinket of the past.

I watched the cities crumble before me, and saw new ones rise out of the ground, up out of the ashes.

I watched my childhood fade like scattered dust in the wind.

I felt my new self take form, felt it burn and rage in the afternoon sun and finally, take over me; raw skin, broken heart, scars and all.

I built my new heart with walls, I did.

I shot down to the village, ignored every flabbergasted stare, every gaping mouth and every dead conversation due upon my arrival.

I ran through the square, my newly cropped hair shooting around me in tangled beams of gold- I was Camicazi.

No, I AM Camicazi- the only of my kind.

I have a sword at my belt and a dragon at my side.

The lifeblood that pumps through these veins is those of my ancestors, and the hunch in my back is the sorrows of my people that I take upon myself.

I am Camicazi.

I am Camicazi, and I am here.

I never stopped running.

I ran from you, even.

I took my new life by force.

I fixed my mother a cottage on the side, and watched her tears stream down her wrinkled cheeks as I bore the weight of her helmet upon my head.

I am a WIFE.

Though, things never DID get back to normal between Thuggery and I.

Oh, he apologized profusely the next afternoon, when I finally returned- and the day after that, and the day after that.

I would've NEVER given in, but I got so SICK of him going around looking like a blasted kicked DOG all the time, so eventually I broke down and started to forgive him.

He's not SO bad, really.

But I told him if he ever went drinking again, I'd string him from the gutters.

And he's obeyed me, because he KNOWS that I would.

Looks like I've trained another good little crabapple, doesn't it?

Just like before- except not really the same at all.

I am a LEADER.

Our tribe didn't just survive anymore- it thrived.

I am the voice of my people.

I am a WARRIOR.

Because sometimes, the only way to survive is to fight.

Sometimes the only way to be heard is to SCREAM.

Sometimes the only way to WIN is to come back, kicking and screaming and rising from the flames.

I led my fiercest into war.

Oh gods, we went to war so many, many times.

Sometimes the things I have seen still haunt me, blood fresh on the grass and fresh in my mind.

I am seventeen now.

I've lived too much, seen too much, felt too much- but to this day the drums of adventure still beat ever vigilant in my mind.

My mother was upset when you wrote back, she was.

Kept saying you were filling my head with ridiculous "Virginal" nonsense.

I kept the drawing book.

It's now the only thing I have left of you. Minus the memories. Minus the ever-dulling pain that sometimes even I can't smother.

Everywhere I went, I got stares.

Every woman's glare pierced me, made my hands fly subconsciously to my stomach where I was SURE no child would ever lie. I would be a rotten mother, I would.

I'm tooâ€| ME.

My mother lectured me in the mornings after I had brought in the daily kills, her hands warbling over her much neglected needlework that sagged like dead bluebirds across her lap.

"All they want is an HEIR, Camicazi."

I had scoffed, wiped the rabbit blood off my palms at her remark, as she frowned I could see the old bit of my mother that she used to be.

"How long are you going to pine after him?" She snapped.

"Who?"

"The \_boy, \_Camicazi- HICCUP."

I straightened up and kept my face a void empty of all emotion, ignoring the tiny pinprick of longing coming from somewhere deep inside.

"I pine after no-one. Not him. Not anymore," I rasped plainly.

My mother made an unintelligible noise and shifted in her chair, the wooden rods moaning under her strained weight.

"Will you not go to your own husband, then?" She asked exasperatedly.

"No."

My mother cursed, and I stared back at her defiantly.

"Thor almighty, Camicazi! Will you EVER learn your lesson?"

I shook my head, fiddling with a baiting hook one of the docks-men had brought me for rabbit snares.

"He's NOT going to come back for you. You've done good to these people, daughter.

It's time for you to move on- be HAPPY. Stop FIGHTING all the got-damned time and build a FAMILY,"

I whirled around furiously,

"I don't WANT him to come back!

And I don't NEED to start a family.

My FAMILY is this TRIBE, Ma. YOUR people."

She sighed, and I knew the battle would never be won.

"Gods me," she swore softly.

A sigh escaped from her lips, rattling like wind in a baby's rattle.

"Iâ€¦ I just wanted to see my grandchildren before I die,"

The bait hook snared my palm and I watched as the ruby red liquid poured onto my skirt. I turned my heel and ran out of the house, ignoring my mother's shouts at me to come back.

I ran and ran and ran, feeling the earth unyielding and hard beneath the soles of me.

I ran till I came to the cliff's edge of my childhood, hearing the roaring ocean lap away at the mountain that I was nestled on.

My chest heaved and I wracked the air back, nearly choking at the straining of my windpipe to keep back the sobs that spread through my body like fire to flypaper.

\_Strong you are, Camicazi.\_

\_Strong is what you HAVE to be.\_

I could do it. Gods, I KNEW I could.

But not now. Now was not good- now was broken.

Now was weak, and now was ME.

I pulled out your last letter to me, dating nearly about a month ago. The ragged little scrap fluttered limply in my calloused palms as I read the words that I already knew by heart.

\_Camicazi- \_

\_It's been a year. Can I please have it back?\_

\_Please, I KNOW you have it, though you keep AVOIDING the subject.\_

\_Please answer- stop ignoring me.\_

\_Hiccup\_

I exhaled, letting the breath stream out my lips slowly, blowing out of that glass body of mine. I had done my best to patch it up over the years, I did.

And I was almost back to normal when I thought I was going to shatter again.

I stood my ground in the salty sea wind, unrolled a small slip of paper from underneath my tattered chemise, and began to write.

\_Hiccup-\_

\_If you want it, come get it.\_

\_Camicazi\_

I had stopped running.

And now I had no idea what to do next, but stop completely.

Then I sat collapsed to the ground, spreading my legs out in front of me, watching as Stormfly coiled away in the strawberry horizon, letter in mouth.

Sleep claimed me until morning, the velvety heather tickling my stubbornly barren eyes as I straightened up at the distant sound of beating wings.

My heart turned to stone when I saw a small distant shape in the sky so blue; In between the space between where the ocean melted into sky laid an insignificant black speck- getting closer.

My heart of walls had room for a window or two- and I opened one to the sound of hope in the form of a boy riding his dragon.

I opened my heart to you, for the second time in my life.

And, for the second time in my life, you came back for me.

## 6. This is the story of me and you

\*\*A/N I KNOW- ridiculously long time. I'M sorry, I'm sorry, I'm SORRY! All I can say for myself is that life happens- and so do finals, and family, and hectic preparations for summer camp. I really hope you enjoy this last chapter- I enjoyed every moment of this story, and I had forgotten how much I enjoyed writing from Camicazi's lovely eyes.\*\*

\*\*That mixed-up-stubborn-spunky-devil, her.\*\*

\*\*I hope I didn't lose you guys, and that the ending isn't too bad.\*\*

\*\*Feedback is ALWAYS appreciated, but please, don't bother flaming me. It won't do either of us any goodâ€¦\*\*

\*\*FUN FACT- in case you didn't know, in the first "how to train your dragon book" the cover page begins with "One day, a small boy digging on the beach stumbled upon a sea-lagged chest containing the memoirs of reknowned pirate, Viking, and sword-fighter H.H.H. III" (except, varied- I'm really too lazy to look it up and quote directly.)  
\*\*

\*\*So, this is where Camicazi comes into play.\*\*

\*\*Please don't be too harsh- I try my hardest.\*\*

\*\*I love you guys, thanks so much for your reviews :-)\*\*

\*\*Always- LadyM\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>It's used to be so hard for me to believe that you were real.<p>

In my mind's eye, you are still the boy that held me by the hand in the hot air balloon- always the hero of the day.

You were a concept, a ghost of sorts; not real. Not flesh and bone, like I was.

You were just a concept.

Did I fall in love with that concept?

Oh gods- help me, if I did.

Now I watched as the sun set you on fire, your dragon's black wings beaming with its yellow glow, marring the crown of your head into a flaming blur.

I straightened up tall, lifting the cleft of my chin towards the sea-blue sky where you approached like a growing fire. My fingers clenched as if by their own will and theirs alone and a fresh jolt of pain singed through my hand as the cut re-opened, spilling its life-blood down my index finger; a river of red down a pale desert.

"Camicazi!" You called, voice drowned out by the roaring of the waves so far below us both, and the wind that threatened to carry me away entirely.

A mighty \_Thud \_resounded as the mossy earth trembled beneath my feet underneath the weight of that dragon of yours, standing true and tall before me; as glossy and dark as a night sky itself, he was.

Gods me, it was you.



Hadn't been but a year since I'd seen you last, but it felt much longer. Almost like our paths had been worn down and ancient long before they even crossed, making the drip of time apart impatient as the days turned into weeks, seconds unto hours, months unto years. And so on, of course.

\_Stand tall, Camicazi.\_ I ordered myself silently. I wasn't the whisper of the girl he had been requited with just a year ago, worn smooth by obedience, longing for reconciliation. I wasâ€¦ Well, I didn't QUITE know what I was longing for anymore. Or what I WANTED from you, for that matter.

I had stepped into the path of queens- the path of my fore-mothers. (Fore-FATHERS were quite less important, for OUR fathers never seemed to stay past supptime.)

I had seen death- felt its breath hot and patient on the back of my neck for too long now. I had lived past death- far past its raw iron clutches, slipping away from them countless times with only a whisper of my shadow accounted for.

What more am I to ask for?

Even \_I\_ know that one can only rely on her good fortune for SO long.

For: the gods are 'impatient, but righteous,' and all the other good, lovely mag-tag they spew at the docks.

But I understand NOW; and I can feel them.

I can feel their steely gaze baring down on me, pinning me to this blighted earth from their stormy thrones- I can feel them glaring at me with their eyes as old as time.

And they KNOW.

They know I have gotten by for too long, left far too many scars and not enough legends.

Another sigh escaped my lips, lost in the gust of wind as you jumped from the back of Toothless, and wobbled for a bit- never quite got your LAND legs, you did.

"Camicazi!" You shouted again, and I felt a gentle pull in my cheek- an aching, of some sort, to form a smile.

I met your gaze, and felt yours immediately lower on contact. You ran towards me- well, rather LIMPED towards me, actually, cursing under your breath all the while. You know, for such a calm person, you sure do store up a lot of hot air sometimes.

"What-" You exhaled, locking eyes with my bloody HAND, and you let an surprised stream of breath \_hiss\_ out through your teeth as you examined the gash.

"What \_happened?\_" You cried, still holding my palm in yours, throbbing and chapped from holding the bridle from the trip between your island and mine.

You stared at me accusingly, and I looked away, feeling anger well up already.

Gods, NO-one else can get me NEARLY so mad as QUICKLY as YOU can.

"Nothing." I jerked away suddenly.

"It's-" You protested.

"It's really nothing," I said quickly, and your mouth opened again stubbornly in protest.

"But, you-" you continued.

"Gods, Hiccup, it's just a HAND!" I snapped, hiding the injured flesh behind my linen jerkin.

I could feel your eyes narrowing even from behind me, boring into my flesh, studying me for sign of cause. I glanced backwards into your puzzled green eyes, and felt a jolt ripple through me as first came the look of recognition, then neglect.

I sighed and unclasped my arms so that they hung loosely at my sides-like they were dead, almost.

"I'm sorry." I murmured shaking the loose hair from my eyes so I wouldn't have to see your reply.

"No, I'm sorry." You called unsteadily, "I just-"

"Hiccup."

"No, I-"

"Hiccup, its fine!" I finally cried, "What? Am I too weak to withstand a simple cut every now and then?"

I watched as your face melted into a grin, but knew I was still treading unstable ground.

"Have you forgotten already that I AM, in fact, the very girl that bested you all those years ago in fort sinister?"

"\_Almost\_ bested," You protested, but the look on your face told me that I had finally broken down our invisible barrier.

"UTTERLY bested." I corrected, smiling wide.

Silence engulfed us as your eyes glazed over, just as they often did when you were thinking hard into something.

"I came." You spoke, voice breaking quietly, "â€|notebook. I mean, I CAME \_for \_the notebook! I came for the noteboo-"

"I know." I said quickly, feeling the spot by my side where your notebook lay tucked between my belt scathe and burn, as if it could sense its own importance.

My arms lifted like leads, removed the leather book from its pocket,

and extended it towards you. Its loose-leaf pages serenading us in the breeze, as you reached up to take it gently, almost as if you were afraid I'd try to take it back.

"Thank you," you exhaled, and I nodded weakly in response.

I hated that I felt disappointment flood through me, sending my bones floating awash in the brine.

I hated that I felt let down- after all, that WAS why you came here.

For your notebook.

NOT me.

Foolish Camicazi, me- when WILL I learn?

And then, we drowned in the silence.

Damned SILENCE.

"It's all YOUR fault, you know," I blurted suddenly as you slowly lifted your chin to face me head on, your green eyes narrowed in thought.

"Had to go and KISS me, didn't you?"

The words were pouring out like a torn fishing net; every thought I had held locked away for all those years began to unfurl, taking wing and fleshing out like they had minds of their own.

"And you KNEW. You knew it wouldâ€¦" I cried, my voice slipped away from me, turning into a whisper, then a shout.

"It- WEâ€¦ we would NEVER happen- COULD never happen!"

You knew that- didn't you?"

The blue sky swallowed my vision whole as I tilted my head straight back, too afraid to look at you. I clenched my fists to my sides, listening to the steady ins and outs of your breath, merely inches away from me.

"You must have known that we were never going to be the \_happy couple\_. You must have known that we were never going to be happy homemakers, and much MUCH less be having a dozen blighted kids out the backdoor."

You stood there, not saying a word, just existing along with me- with the rest of the world.

"I was never that much to you," I breathed, "I never quite added up, did I?"

"I justâ€¦ sometimes I MISS it. Can you believe that? I miss everything. Gods, I don't know what I'm looking for anymore."

But I'll never find it- I may have had it once, but it's not there for me to keep anymore."

Then you did something strange, you did. You enclosed your hand round my wrist and brought it up to eye level, gazing at it curiously.

"What're you doing?" I hissed, jerking away like a flash.

"Nothing- OW!" you cried, flinching as my hand collided with your temple in the motherly rebuke I had so perfected over the years.

"I was justâ€¦" Your face turned as scarlet as a sunrise, it did, "Just- checkingâ€¦"

I licked my lips, everything was slowly snapping into place.

I held my breath hotly as you began tracing the indentation of my swirling veins underneath the thin gossamer veil of skin on my wrist, sending unwanted shivers down my throat as you did so, with a look of childish suspicion in your eyes.

"You thought Iâ€¦ YOU! You, you thought I did it on-!" My voice rose in indignation, the once-peaceful moment shattered to a million pieces.

"No!" You protested, a hand flying to the back of your neck, the other waving wildly in the air, "I just, I mean, your HAND, the blood-!"

"\_WELL \_I \_wouldn't, \_all right?" I snapped, flames burning up my neck, onto my cheeks and temples.

"Well, you sounded like it." You stated, quieter now, wrapping your arms round your chest just as I was.

"I'm not like that, Hiccup." I whispered.

"No, you aren't," you agreed firmly, something hard set in the undertone of your voice, "Butâ€¦"

"But what?" I hissed.

You paused, chewing one freckled lip thoughtfully as you plucked a grass stem from the ground and wound it around your thumb till it had turned nearly purple.

"Camicazi?" You asked tentatively.

I sighed irritably, refusing to look at you.

"Yeah?" I finally answered.

"There's a time in life when you get to choose what's going to stop you and what won't. Don'tâ€¦ let me stand in your way. Gods, don't let \_anyone\_ stand in your way,"

I gaped at you- awestruck.

"It's not that simple," I whispered.

You sighed and the wind rustled from the sea of the distance, sending

the heather billowing out against our ankles.

"I know," you said, "Things rarely are. And maybe- well, OK, \_MOSTLYâ€¦\_ this is my fault. I wasâ€¦ I was so \_angry\_- gods, you just \_walked\_ out of my life, how COULDN'T you expect me to be angry? You wereâ€¦ you were \_Camicazi\_. And I missed you for so long- but, life goes on before our heart does. \_Andâ€¦\_ then, you came back. But you don't understand- my life had already gone on. We were travelling backwards, and I let it happen. Don't you see? This is not the end of our story- just the end of a CHAPTER. A small, meaningless, insignificant CHAPTER. You'll have so many more. So many more.

And, so will I- It's time for us to start living them."

I didn't need to look up to know that your gaze was on me- I could feel it, boring straight into my side, so I retreated within myself. I stared at the ground, hoping furiously for a distraction. For ANYTHING.

"NOTHING was ever \_easy, \_Hiccup." I agreed quietly.

"But that's never stopped YOU before, has it, Camicazi?" you countered. You gave me one of your classic lopsided grins that I had grown to associate with the familiarity of both smugness and defeat at the rate of which could only be portrayed by you.

"I don't expect you to do anything for me, you know." I snapped hurriedly.

"We're here for the book. That's what you came for- that's what I came for."

You nodded quickly, in agreement.

"I mean, don't expect me to be here waiting FOREVER," I continued aimlessly, a stubborn tone clinging to my voice.

"Gods, Hiccup, I mean, I'm not the same person you knew last year. I have a family nowâ€¦ a TRIBEâ€¦ responsibilitiesâ€¦ the list is ENDLESS, truly."

Your lips pulled into a small smile.

"I know." You stated plainly.

Bloody confusing boy, you.

I straightened up promptly and joined you in the act of staring-off-into-the-distance-at-nothing-in-particular.

"Butâ€¦ Camicazi?" I snapped my eyes upwards in your direction and saw you bite your lip in child-like puzzlement.

"That's not the ONLY reason I came," you admitted, and my eyes narrowed in expectation.

"WHAT, then?" I pried, feeling myself already shutting down, merging into defense.

"Can youâ€¦ can you do something for me?" You broke through the

silence, opening the notebook suddenly.

"Depends." I answered quietly.

You thrust the notebook into my arms, and I looked down at it, baffled.

"This is more than just scribbles- It'sâ€¦ It's my story," you explained softly, a wildly hopeful look in your eyes. I opened my mouth to counter, but you interrupted me in response.

"You seeâ€¦ It's so much more than that, even. It's Berks story, the VIKING'S story- OUR story I did it a long time ago. I never thought I'd actually get the chance to tell themâ€¦"

I gazed at you impassively, blinking back my endless list of questions that popped up like stubborn birds.

"Your story's in there too, you know."

You murmured, and I looked up suddenly.

"What I mean, isâ€¦ our story. Because it never ended with you- not really. If I were any-body else, I would say it was destiny- but we know better than that.

Your life and mine were just two parts of the whole picture- interwoven, but not pre-defined. How small are we in comparison to this whole world? I'm not an expert, but I'd say PRETTY small."

I felt a small pang of childish intrigue from the bottom of my stomach.

You and your stories- nothing good ever came of them, I'll tell you.

"Hiccup," I pointed out irritably, "There's nothing but DRAWINGS in there."

"Ah," You grinned, wagging a finger at me slyly, "But, THAT, my dear Camicazi, is where you are ever-so wrong.

You see-" you leaned close in excitement, if not urgency.

"â€¦It's got a spell on it." You whispered at me excitedly.

I paused.

"THAT, is ridiculous." I cried.

"No, no," you continued, "It will only be apparent when the time is ready. The words, I mean."

"Ridiculous." I repeated.

You stared at me intently; waiting patiently for a response that I knew would do me NO good- no good to EITHER of us, really.

I let out a long exhale-

"How do you know?" I asked weakly, staring straight forward.

You paused.

"It'sâ€¦ it's, uh," You stuttered, rubbing the back of your neck complacently.

"â€¦written in mgjdragnblodâ€¦"

"Pardon?" I asked, raising my eyebrows in confusion.

"Magcdragnbldâ€¦"

"I'm sorry, what was that?"

"OH for gods sake- \_MAGIC dragon blood\_."

I clutched my stomach fiercely, barely containing a suppressed laugh.

"MAGIC you say?" I spewed, erupting into laughter, "Why didn't you say so, my dear boy?" I stopped immediately at the look of retained fury in your face.

"I'm sorry." I apologized firmly, "I justâ€¦ \_why\_?"

You let out a sigh that sounded like rattling bones.

"I don't want any-one else to make the same mistakes. In anything- in leadership, in dragon-training, inâ€¦"

You went silent.

I never DID find out what you were going to say.

"Maybe some-day, some-one will want to read it. And you know me, Camicazi- this will work. I wouldn't've bothered with it unless I was sure. \_Mostly\_ sure, even. Iâ€¦I've hidden the rest. Those are the beginning. \_My \_beginning."

You shot me a lopsided grin.

"\_Our \_beginning. And there are more- but I'll write them when the time comes."

I nodded slowly, and a smile spread across your cheeks.

"Hiccup?" I murmured.

"Yeah?"

"You didn'tâ€¦ meâ€¦ I mean, you didn't- did you?"

Some-where in your eyes, a light dulled, and I knew I wasn't going to find my answer, no matter how hard I searched.

You lifted a single finger to graze against my bare elbow and I felt the skin there shatter into a million tiny goosebumps. From the chill, of course.

You looked down, and I stared at you inquiringly, mutely.

"It would mean the world to me, Camicazi."

And you left me at that, you did.

You turned and mounted Toothless, whose emerald eyes snapped open in cat-like alertness.

"Hiccup-?" I called, and you turned your gaze back to me, understanding.

You lifted off, and I watched as the wind took you up in its arms, your russet hair crinkling in the gust. Rising higher, higher, full above my head now, and then with a deafening whirl of air, you were gone- fading into the horizon.

"I will." I whispered, clenching the notebook to my chest...

"\_I will.\_"

I locked them in a wooden chest, a bog-burglar crest dug into the lid, and buried them deep beneath the sandy shore where you gave me that last look over your shoulder that day; many, MANY years afterwards- the day you caught glimpse of little Ellyn clutching my skirt from behind in her tiny porcelain fists. I watched as your eyes dimmed from atop Toothless's back, something in them going dull before you nodded at me, acknowledging me for the very last time.

I never saw you again.

But I can still hear your words whispering from that deep place where no amount of time can smooth over-

"\_Your story's in there too, you know.\_"

\_What I mean, isâ€¦ our story. Because it never ended without you- not really. If I were any-body else, I would say it was destiny- but we know better than that. \_

\_Your life and mine were just two parts of the whole picture- interwoven, but not interdefined. How small are we in comparison to this whole world? I'm not an expert, but I'd say PRETTY small.\_"

Maybe you're right. No, you probably are.

How small ARE we?

Insignificant, ridiculously miniscule, yet so ABSORBED in our own insignificant, ridiculously miniscule lives that we overlook the fact of this itself.

Maybe it won't matter what we did or what we said- who we conquered, who we gave life, who we brought out of it. But maybe it matters to some-one else.

Maybe no-one will ever read your story. But who knows for sure?



I'm still betting that they may. MAY.

I never wrote my story, but that's alright.

I suppose I'll wait until some-one's ready to hear it.

And, who knows?

Maybe my day will come at last.

End  
file.